VIEWING THE WORLD AS AN ORGANISM

WORLD ORDER

OCTOBER 1937

CITIZEN OF THE WORLD • • RUBY LORRAINE RADFORD

PEACE REALISTS • • • • KENNETH CHRISTIAN

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IN THE MASTER'S PRESENCE • • • • INEZ GREVEN

ECONOMICS AS SOCIAL CREATION • HORACE HOLLEY

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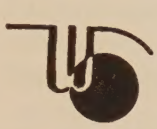


THE MIRROR AND THE BLACK STONE

EDITORIAL

THE gift of parable, by which spiritual truth is conveyed in its integrity, without subtle alteration caused by acquired knowledge, has returned to earth in the writings of the Bahá'í Faith. Once more it has become possible for human beings, as human beings and not as conditioned members of some one race, class or creed, to see the clear path laid down for the soul.

Despite the "half-light" of an age that feels itself moved toward some cataclysmic end that may be death or may be new life, the Bahá'í writings shine with their own illumination. Those who check their plunging course can acquire the inwardness of truth.

Thus, in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's exposition of the spiritual life we come upon the simplest and most essential of parables, that which distinguishes faith in God from every other type of experience.

The condition of faith, He said, is like that of the clear, polished mirror. From its surface the light of truth reflects outward. The condition of unfaith, He said, is that of the black stone, which gathers all light to itself and reflects no single ray outside.

What do we do with the light of life that continuously shines from the heavens of divine Will? Is it a force for truth, for fellowship, for healing and for courage made immediately available for all others in our com-

munity? Or is it transmuted into something instinctively selfish, something furtive, secretive, jealously seized for our own personal end?

The subtlest and most devious influence of theology or philosophy cannot betray this elemental picture of the way of truth. Thinking of the power of spirit in terms of the mirror and the black stone, we have the criterion; we can apply it to others, but above all we can apply it to ourself.

In utter darkness there is no difference between the mirror and the black stone. It is when light is revealed that the world of difference between them becomes manifest.

Every one knows numerous types of religious life among his own personal acquaintances. Some follow a pretentious form of worship; others a simpler form; and some practice no public worship at all. Even so: the difference is not there, in the form, but deeper, in the quality of response. One has but to think of the mirror and the black stone to stand apart from all artificial distinctions. Religion today is one's life, and the implications of life cannot be disguised if we judge in truth.

But the parable of the mirror and the black stone has even greater meaning when applied to religion the institution. In this larger field it still remains the source of true discrimination.

Does an institution live in order to serve the dire needs of the world of humanity? Has it no collective thought for itself, but only thought and concern to apply universal truth for the solution of problems of war and peace, of class strife, of race antagonism? If so, that institution stands in the relationship of the mirror. But if its chief concern is for its own social power and material resources; if it seeks to draw all life to itself; if it is committed merely to the instinct of survival under the conditions of conflict—such an institution is nothing else than the black stone. It reflects no pure light to the surrounding society. Its function remains that of the self refusing to serve the supreme Will.

What wonder that even the greatest of institutions, at such times as the Prophet comes with the Light, eventually suffer extinction because they refuse to become servants of the Light? The individual acquires spiritual life only to the degree that he can serve a social purpose greater than himself. In exactly the same way, institutions come to judgment at the time of the renewal of religion. If they function for larger historic ends, they are vitalized by the spirit of the new day. If, however, their own authority becomes an end to itself, they are rejected by the flow of life. The more they resist the divine Will, the sooner they are overtaken by destiny.

H. H.

CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

RUBY LORRAINE RADFORD

Is not the pressure of human progress bursting the bonds of nationalism that confine people within a limited geographical area? Are we not becoming, in more than an idealistic sense, citizens of the world? And what is true of the people of the United States applies to all other progressive nations of the world. Americans have gone forth to the four corners of the globe, carried hence by various motives from the most altruistic to the most selfish. Great Britain has long boasted that the sun never sets upon her possessions and her people. Even the Chinese, that remnant of a great civilization of another age, are scattered now throughout every nation. The world metropolises are melting-pots of all peoples.

Since the dawn of civilization the flowers of each race have in a very true sense, been citizens of the world. Religion, the arts and sciences are no longer national; they speak a language variously interpreted by the hearts and minds of all peoples. Plato and Socrates did not think only for the Greeks, but blazed the trail of intellectual development for thinkers of all nations to follow. The perfection of Greek and Roman architecture at its prime is still an ideal toward which the world's architects strive. Shakespeare has been translated into every language, because he wrote of human emotions and aspirations, common to all people. Darwin's discoveries in physical science shook the world out of apathy, and revolutionized science. Bach's sonorous chords of music could not be confined within the German nation, but set up reverberations that encompassed the globe, turning men's souls to the beauty of the infinite and intangible.

These highest products of civilization can no more be confined within the physical boundaries of any nation, than a program broadcasted over radio can hold its vibrations within a given area. Modern inventions have linked the world in an indissoluble bond. An event occurring on some remote island in the morning may be flashed through the world's newspapers in the evening. A thousand years ago such an event would have been heard of months or years later, or perhaps never. Time and space were very real barriers then, cutting off one group of people from another. Now these two factors are becoming non-existent.

DESPITE these phases of progress which tend to link the nations of the world into real brotherhood, we go on thinking in terms of nationalism. In the dawn of human development Cain asked God if he were his brother's keeper, and many people today still haven't found the answer to that question. Through ages of bitter experience in isolated villages man was initiated into the first degree of brotherhood; he gradually learned that he thrived best when banded with others for the common good. Now that community spirit manifests itself in our city governments, which in its idealistic state operates for the good of all.

Our second great initiation as a people in the truth of brotherhood came when groups of cities banded themselves together in what was called a nation. Then the shuttle of trade was soon to begin weaving strands of common interest among the nations. The weaving went on steadily, the threads growing more numerous and stronger as the years passed, though often broken and shattered by the moneyed few, willing to sacrifice other lives on the altar of their greed.

Greed stalked among the nations of the world, growing steadily more sinister, because it became more opulent and powerful as the years passed. But in greed is the germ of its own destruction. It is a monster, which will consume itself if left alone. During these testing years of depression the destruction of this outer, material shell has gone on apace, and at last the shell is growing so thin that some men can see true values; that world unity can never be based on material aspects, but upon the brotherhood of spirit wherein we are all innately one.

While merchant princes wove their shuttle of trade deeper and deeper into the dark recesses of the world, seeking gain, their more spiritual brothers have penetrated with them, carrying Light. And now that we are beginning to see the hollow superstructure of greed for what it is, those threads of Light, linking the world together, are shining more brightly than ever. Some still blinded by pain and suffering cannot yet see those lines of Light glowing stronger and stronger between the spiritual workers of the world. East has come into West, and West into East to carry light where none was thought to be shining. But beneath the outer cloak of varied expressions the same source of light was discovered. Now is growing the realization that all souls are reaching up to the same God, no matter by what name He is called.

WITH the growing realization of the actual oneness of all spiritual aspiration the Light will glow ever more and more brightly, until the dark shell of material selfishness shall be utterly destroyed, until man shall know that the divine spark feebly glowing within the lowliest savage is the same that glows within himself, and shall reach out a helping hand to him as to a brother.

THE FLUTE PLAYED BY SHRÍ KRISHNA

H. M. MANJI

THE Flute played by Shrí Krishna had a great inner significance; inasmuch as He not only played on the Flute, but also sang a Song which is as famous and well-known in the world as the Flute itself. That Song is universally known as Shrí Bhagwat Gítá which literally means "the Holy Song of the Lord."

Well, what is that Song? And what was that Flute? Before we answer these questions, let us definitely understand what is a song and what is music.

A song is a symmetrical collection of words composed in a certain theme, commencing its construction in this theme, then enlarging and disclosing its blendings and developing its subject into other subjects, but always coming back to the primal theme and finishing its motive in it, showing the consistency, the roundness and wholeness of its conception.

Music is a combination of harmonious sounds revolving around a certain key, commencing its symphony in this key, then enlarging and opening its phrases and developing its tune into other keys, but always coming back to the primal key and finishing its melody in it, showing the consistency, the roundness and wholeness of its conception.

Was the playing of Krishna on the Flute a music of this kind? Is the Song sung by Him a poetry of this kind? Certainly not, if we take it materially; but assuredly yes, if we go deeper and see its inner significances.

Shrí Bhagwat Gítá revealed by Shrí Krishna is not poetry, for in it we do not find symmetrical words deliberately composed in poetical rendering; apparently the Verses have no Sanskrit meters, nor can they be literally translated into the meters of any other language.

But throughout all of the Words of Shrí Krishna there is shining one fixed Eternal Principle. Shrí Krishna revealed to us the spiritual Symphony of true Religion, setting forth all His Teachings in the eternal living key of Love; enlarging and developing His Theme into different subjects—just as "Forgiveness," "Patience," "Truth," "Meditation," "Renunciation," "Justice," "Mercy," "Human Courage" or "Mastery over Nature," and so on,—disclosing exquisite blendings, but always coming back to the Primal Theme, back to the great spiritual motive of the Symphony, the Love of God, the motive which controls the universe, the motive around which the whole Brahmmand

(i. e. the universe) is constructed, the great principle of Love Divine. This is what is called the Song of the Lord; and this is what was sung by Shrí Krishna thousands of years ago and it yet echoes from the hearts and souls of millions of men, women and children even today.

Now, let us come to our central theme, our original subject. What was that Flute which Shrí Krishna played on? Is that Flute still preserved somewhere by any one of the disciples of Shrí Krishna? Is it to be found in any museum of the world; or even in any temple or cave, however historical and ancient it may be?

As the flute is a musical instrument, we must find out the inner significance of music in order to find the reality of the Flute played by Shrí Krishna, just as we have found the reality of the "Song" sung by Him.

"In the final analysis of all things," says Shahnaz Waite, "physically, mentally and spiritually, we are brought face to face with the great truth that Life is Love, and Love is Life, and its audible voice is music." Law of Attraction gives life to the material world by composing the elements, so the Law of Love, which is the fundamental reality of every Religion, gives life eternal to the human world by molding into one the hearts and minds of the peoples.

Look at the world, study deeply the present conditions and find out the root cause of wars and bloodshed, of hatred and prejudices, of poverty and starvation. It is simply because there is no selfless Love in the realms of human hearts and minds. Bound together by the ties of business, of marriage, of political pact and covenant, of indulgent tolerance or ordinary amenities of human necessities, or of even so-called religious customs and ceremonies and of names and groups of societies, human beings cannot become one and united; these ties and ropes are liable to break at any moment. It is like tying together some iron bars, no matter how closely and strongly they are tied. Let the Divine Metallurgist come on the scene and melt all these bars in the fiery furnace of the Love of God, cast them in one single mold of spiritual brotherhood of mankind; then, and then only will their atoms commingle with each other, their spirits, souls, minds, hearts, thoughts, interests, aims and purposes become united and inseparable.

Hence it is clear that religion is love, and love is music. It is towards this Music that Shrí Krishna was able to attract 1,600 Gopies, many cows, few nagas and some children of men, all of whom were none else than His followers differing in their respective ranks and degrees of devotion. They were all human beings. Because, the magical effect of a material flute on a naga (serpent) or a cow is not a miracle that any ordinary shepherd boy or a flute-player cannot perform. Playing on a material flute can in no way exalt the dignity of a Holy Manifestation of God. It is the establishment of the spiritual sovereignty in the countries of human souls that has proved the unequaled power and matchless dignity of Shrí Krishna.

There is no doubt that "a certain kind of melody makes the spirit happy; another makes it sad; still another excites it to action. All these emotions can be caused by the voice of music. Whatever is in the heart of man, music moves and awakens. If the heart is full of good feelings, and a pure voice is joined together, a great effect is produced. For instance, if there be love in the heart, through melody it will increase until its intensity can scarcely be borne, but if evil thoughts are in the heart, such as hatred, it will increase and multiply. Some feelings occur accidentally and some have a foundation. Some people are naturally kind, but they may be accidentally upset by a wave of anger, but when they hear music, the true nature will reassert itself. Music therefore really awakens the real nature, the individual essence."[1]

It is here that whenever the appearance of a Holy Manifestation takes place, all the forces around Him are set in motion: some apparently ignorant persons and men of no importance, all of a sudden attain to the Zenith of knowledge and exaltation; while some kings, monarchs and so-called religious heads turn into Rákshasas and Ghosts of darkness; possessors of potential love begin to love the Truth; possessors of potential gratitude begin to praise the Truth; possessors of potential energy begin to spread the Truth; possessors of potential justice begin to justify the Truth in their actual lives and daily practice; in short, all the heavenly attributes begin to flourish and spread far and wide through human virtues; and on the other hand, all the evil forces gird up their loins and rise up against the Ishwari Awtar (Manifestation of God).

Turn your gaze to the history of the world and you will find that these were the periods of motion, of activities, and of movements in each field of existence and in every department of life; these were the turning points of history itself; and these regular and successive Appearances of the Divine Religion were the only prime-movers of humanity in every age.

A CHAPTER in history began with the appearance of Ráma, another with that of Buddha, and still another with that of Krishna; a new chapter in history began with the appearance of Abraham, another with that of Moses, and still another with that of Zoroaster; again, a fresh chapter in history began with the appearance of Christ, another with that of Muhammad, and still another with that of the Báb and Bahá'u'llah. A little prior to the appearance of each of these Divine Day-Springs the world was in complete darkness, it was frozen cold, and humanity was nothing but a spiritually dead body. There are no reliable histories of those dark periods, but the existence of such periods was proof in itself that the Divine Daybreak was at hand.

Thus sayeth the Lord through Shrí Krishna in Shrimad Bhagwat Gítá:

"From time to time whenever there occurs downfall of Religion, (and) the rise of irreligion, then My Spirit do I create. For the protection of the righteous, the destruction of evil-doers, (and) to firmly establish the

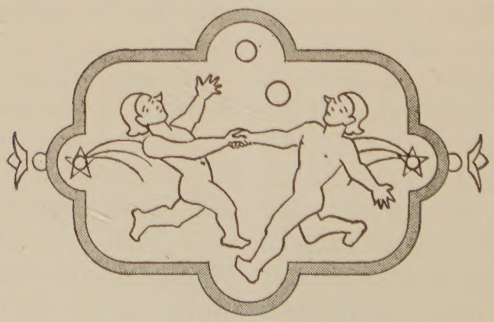
1—'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Religion, I manifest Myself from age to age."

Today the Reality of Shrí Krishna hath once again appeared in the Person of Bahá'u'lláh with the same Sudarshan Chakra (Discus of Vishnu) of His supreme power and unfailing authority singing a new song in a new Melody suited to the present age. Shrí Bhagwat Gítá was a Song of outward practical Teachings suited to that age. Gáthá revealed by Zoroaster was fit for its own age. Qur'án revealed by the Prophet Muhammad was fit for its own age. In all these ages *the Religion* remained the Same. The only difference was that in the time when Krishna lived a specific musical melody was required to stir Arjun to action; in the time when Moses lived another specific melody was required to establish strict justice among those lawless tribes in his days; and in the time when Christ lived still another specific melody was required to encourage the disciples of Christ to face afflictions and suffer glorious martyrdoms. In brief, all these different and various Melodies, Tunes and Songs formed one complete Symphony which has brought us here, in turn, to an age which is nothing but the Promised Age of all the ages, the ultimate Purpose of all past Songs.

Today is the day of commingling of races, nations, languages, religious institutions, human practices, thoughts, theories, actions and spirits.

Bahá'u'lláh provides us with all these. Let us listen to the Call of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: "Let us listen to a Symphony which will confer life on man; then can we obtain universal results; then shall we receive a new spirit; then shall we become illumined. Let us investigate a Song which is above all songs, one which will develop the spirit and produce harmony and exhilaration, unfolding the inner potentialities of life." Let us recall to our minds in its pure essence the sweetest spiritual enchanting Melodies of the *Flute played by Shrí Krishna.*



PEACE REALISTS

KENNETH CHRISTIAN

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH has written, "All men were created to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization."

This decisive statement from the pen of the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith is in staunch contrast to the nationalistic, fearful, and selfish motives predominating in the present world turmoil. To appreciate this statement by Bahá'ulláh, we must accept, in understanding of the world crisis, the premise that all world difficulties hinge upon the solution of the war problem.

We cannot solve the enigma of economic illness within the nation. It must be done inter-nationally. We cannot solve the problem of collective security by military pacts. It must be done inter-nationally.

War is the fearful skeleton rattling in the closets of the world. Fear of its imminence has dispelled mental sanity. We must rid ourselves of the skeleton of war. And we are left but one alternative to seek—that is peace.

The word "peace" has many connotations and meanings. The majority of people, however, who glibly use it have no concrete idea of its meaning. It is an *ideal.* It is the opposite of militarism. It is the application of the principle of brotherhood between nations. Other than these vague definitions, the majority of people have no definite conception of a world peace.

Consequently, we should admit that, as an actual condition, we do not know what world peace is.

Individuals have been able to attain a state of harmony with themselves and with their fellow-men which is aptly called "peace." Moses, Buddha, Jesus, and the other Founders of Religion are outstanding examples of individuals who possessed a personal peace. Creative men and women who achieved humanitarian goals of service have also found "peace." And many humble people, in all walks of life, have found peace in a world of turmoil.

Groups of individuals united by the family bond have been able to attain a workable peace and harmony. And unity is sometimes manifest in groups sharing a common spiritual dynamic. The person who has not, at some time or other, come in contact with such a family or group is unfortunate indeed.

But beyond the group of individuals peace is not known. Hence our fundamental problem—to establish among nations what is commonly known as the ideal of peace.

And many people are working for that ideal. A recent listing of peace societies in America revealed that there are 360 such organizations.

THE Bahá'í Faith would not be listed as a peace society since it is a World Religion. Nevertheless, the first goal of the Bahá'í Faith is world unity. The "Most Great Peace" mentioned continually by Bahá'u'lláh in His Writings is a definite system of world civilization. And the term, the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, is applied to those social and administrative institutions which will be the basis of the Most Great Peace.

These facts differentiate the Bahá'í from the average worker for peace. The average peace worker is an idealist. The Bahá'í is a *peace realist.*

There are definite reasons why the Bahá'í is a peace realist. The first is that the Bahá'í Plan of Peace represents "humanity's coming of age." The past religious Prophets have told of a great day when peace would overshadow all the earth and unite its many peoples. Humanitarians and far-visioned poets have also dreamed of a similar world condition. The great rush of inventions and the speed with which communication has been increased during the past seventy-five years has for the first time knit the world together. This has resulted in a world economics and the exchange of produce between far-distant parts of the globe. People of the world are now sensitive to the needs and desires of their distant neighbors in other lands. So the evolution of human skill and aspirations has brought humanity to the point where world unity is possible for the first time. Bahá'ís regard this as humanity's coming of age—the sensible and inevitable time when a secure federation of world peoples can be set up. Even a cursory glance at the institutions outlined by Bahá'u'lláh shows that they represent the natural evolution of nationalistic cultures into a world Super-State.

The second reason is that the Bahá'í Plan of Peace readily unites people of different race and faith. The Bahá'í Faith condemns no other religion; rather all religions are honored for their immeasurable value to the human spirit in its higher aspirations. The Bahá'í Faith condemns no race; rather it raises aloft, unflinchingly, the banner of the Oneness of Mankind. The Bahá'í Faith condemns no humanitarian enterprise; rather all constructive effort is recognized as working toward the unconscious goal of humanity—a world civilization.

The *third* reason is that the Bahá'í Plan of Peace is definite. Bahá'u'lláh, in His Writings, has provided a comprehensive system of world civilization. He has outlined the principles and laws which must be upheld by the governing institutions of such a civilization. He has given us the economic principles by which world trade can be kept in a constant state of flux and by which business can be cooperative rather than ruthlessly competitive. He has set up a system of education by which the social efforts of peoples may be directed toward creative and spiritual living.

THE writings of Bahá'u'lláh are so definite that they can be put into operation by degrees rather than waiting for some nice, far-off time for the beginning of their application. In fact, they are so definite that they are already being put into practice. The teaching efforts being carried on in all parts of the earth by Bahá'ís is a leavening process in a mad world. A sense of harmony, which is individual peace, is being attained by countless numbers of people. Groups are being continually established in all the continents functioning on the basic principle of unity. The tributes of well-known people such as Queen Marie of Roumania, Hellen Keller, President Masaryk of Czechoslovakia, Leo Tolstoy, and Herbert Adams Gibbons clearly bear witness to this influence. Heroic efforts are being daily made to eliminate the false prejudices of race and nationalism. The erection of the Bahá'í House of Worship near Chicago, Illinois, and the beginning of educational and humanitarian work in many countries is an evidence of the vitality permeating those who acknowledge the Bahá'í Faith. The formation of National Spiritual Assemblies with their affiliated committees in nine countries of the world is proof of the steady progress made in laying the foundations for the world institutions of Bahá'u'lláh.

The *fourth* reason is that the Bahá'í Plan of Peace progresses upon the fire of devotion kindled in the hearts of individuals. This is the secret of its power. This is the reason why in less than a century, from an almost unnoticeable beginning in Persia, the Bahá'í teachings have encircled the globe, a phenomenal growth nothing short of miraculous.

AND when people ask what kindles the fire of devotion, there is but one answer. Bahá'u'lláh has revealed the word of God for the modern age and shown the progress of religious revelation from the beginnings of recorded history up to the present. He has made this picture of religious development so convincing that it is today accepted as the only spiritual message which can unite the religions of the world.

Here are a few sentence excerpts from His writings: "Let your vision be world-embracing, rather than confined to your own self." . . . "This is the changeless faith of God, eternal in the past, eternal in the future." . . . "That one indeed is a man who, today, dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race." In moving simplicity Bahá'u'lláh calls upon men to walk in the way of world peace, "to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization."

So the challenging appeal sounds forth to a world in turmoil, and as the many peace groups work for their ideals, the Bahá'í champions a Plan of Peace which represents humanity's coming of age, unites all peoples, is definite in its provisions, and which progresses upon the fire of devotion enkindled in the hearts of men and women. The Bahá'í, motivated by the word of God, is a peace realist.

THE NEW CREATION

ALICE SIMMONS COX

IV. MAN'S CAPACITY FOR ILLUMINATION (CONTINUED)

"Our knowledge is a torch of smoky pine
That lights the pathway but one step ahead
Across a void of mystery and dread.
Bid, then, the tender light of faith to shine
By which alone the mortal heart is led
Unto the thinking of the thought divine."
—*George Santayana*

For many centuries, perhaps since the days when ancient philosophers first spoke words of wisdom, there has been some understanding of a distinction between the powers of reason and the emotional or desire nature of man. This distinction has even been extended to theories of separation which place the seat of the intellect in a definite compartment in relation to the human body, and the seat of desire in a different location. The term "heart" has long been used as a symbol of the emotional capacities of man, sometimes to represent spiritual emotions, and on occasions to signify both physical and spiritual desire.

The scriptural literature of the world abounds in references to the heart of man, to the necessity for its purification, and to the truth that it is a most important instrument of the human soul. In the light of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings on the nature of the reality of man much in ancient spiritual writings that has appeared obscure now can be viewed with fuller understanding. The Word of Buddha, The Laws of Moses, the teachings of the long line of Hebrew prophets, become miraculously illumined for the souls that have eyes wherewith to see.

Modern educators are making a valiant effort to understand the part the emotional nature plays in the motivation and evolution of humanity, endeavoring, as they learn from traditional teachings and from experience, to coordinate all the faculties of the human individual. If they could but interpret rightly the words of the Christ, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," how quickly would many of the problems

that confront the educational leaders of the world disappear.

In renewing the teachings of the Messengers of God, who in past cycles fulfilled their missions of preparing humanity for this Day of spiritual understanding and divine civilization, and in expanding the teachings of God in accordance with the increased capacity of men to understand them, Bahá'u'lláh has met this fundamental need for true education. Careful study of His explanations of the inherent capacities of man, if made with a spirit of open-minded search, can but clear away all wrong conceptions concerning the faculties with which man is endowed. So important is it for the human soul to understand its own functions that Bahá'u'lláh exclaims, "In this connection, He Who is the eternal King . . . hath spoken: 'He hath known God who hath known himself'."[1]

THE term "heart" Bahá'u'lláh uses to designate one of the faculties of the human spirit, one of the powers of the understanding, the one through which the rational soul makes contact with the world of inspiration, divine or satanic. He goes further to show that, while in reality this function of the soul is an indissoluble unity, it appears to human understanding as serving two functions, both functions arising from the root point of desire. On one hand it is the central focus of the soul, the point around which other dependent faculties revolve. It is the treasure house in which memory guards all knowledge that has become part of the true reality of man. Likewise, it is the directing power, the motivating force which turns attention of the understanding to the mysteries of the world without man and within.

The affections of the heart at any one moment may be many and varied, divided and opposing, thus dividing the personality of man, diverting his intellect and wasting his energies. As fashioned by God, however, the potential heart of man is one and undivided. When an individual begins life upon this earth his heart is pure. This original condition of undefilement is that of innocence, not of spiritual strength, of infancy, not that of conscious illumination which is the result of development in a world that requires the operation of choice. In the life process upon earth, very often veils of worldly learning and incrustations of wilful disobedience in some degree conceal the original nature even from its possessor. The man who at first cannot know himself and his true inner desire to find God and life "in His image" because of immature intelligence and lack of sensory experiences, later finds his understanding of all humanity clouded by prejudice, superstition, closed thinking and wilful passion. He has no remembrance of the morn of his own creation when as a child he came from a God of Love.

There is no way of freeing the human spirit from any one of these limitations but through an appeal to the heart. There is no way of educating souls or of reforming them except by reaching the desire center of the soul and bringing to light a purer emotion, creating as it were a conscious desire for improvement. It is

1—Iqán, pp. 101-102.

to accomplish this task that all wise educators first turn. To accomplish this on the scale of spiritual regeneration is the first mission of every Prophet sent from the realm of celestial ideals and powers.

Bahá'u'lláh's first great command to His loved ones is this: "Possess a pure, a kindly and a radiant heart that thine may be a sovereignty, ancient, imperishable and everlasting."[2] By His first work, that through His Forerunner, His previous Manifestation, the youthful Báb, He awakened the hearts of thousands of souls in Persia in preparation for the greater Revelation He Himself was destined to unfold for their understanding.

"As the human heart, as fashioned by God, is one and undivided, it behoveth thee to take heed that its affections be, also, one and undivided," He admonishes all souls today. "Cleave thou, therefore, with the whole affection of thine heart unto His love, and withdraw it from the love of any one besides Him, that He may aid thee to immerse thyself in the ocean of His unity."[3]

"Open the doors of your minds," calls Bahá'u'lláh in His Tablet to Christians. "Verily, the Spirit standeth behind them . . . We have opened unto you the gates of the Kingdom; are ye closing the door of your houses before My Face? . . . Verily, the Spirit of Truth hath come to guide you unto all Truth. Verily, He speaketh not unto you from Himself, nay rather from before the All-Knowing, the Wise. . . . He is the One whom the Son hath glorified. . . . He attracts you unto a station wherein you will behold the Lights of the Face."[4]

The Christ through His life and its earthly consummation in a supreme act of sacrifice on Calvary lifted souls into the light of Divine love. For this reason He could say in foresight, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." With the magic of divine attributes He not only showed to men of the West the way of fruition, but also touched their hearts with a radiance and warmth, an attraction which awakens in good time all but the calloused, and then sets aglow in waiting, searching souls the flame of spiritual love. Such love unifies all human faculties through the dominance of the angelic desire nature. Before the throne of the love of God all lesser emotions and drives become subordinate and in tune. This throne is the center around which the manifest attributes of virtue must revolve. In the growth of spiritual understanding as in all smaller achievement, love for the ideal and obedience to its commands are the steps that must precede all true progress. Knowledge, volition and action are the trinity of attainment.

Love, when it touches an eager heart as a ray from a Manifestation of God, whether through the medium of precept or example, or through direct inspiration in the invisible world of spirit, engenders in the human soul the spirit of faith. Such faith is a definite reality, born of the knowledge of the light the soul has experienced, and consisting of confidence in the sovereignty, the power and the goodness of God. Its birth is possible because the faculty

2—Hidden Words.

3—Gleanings, pp. 238-239.

4—Bahá'í Scriptures, pp. 42

of human understanding turns meditatively to the realm of Holy Spirit, the attraction of which has been felt by the heart. It is a conferred faculty granted by the Creator for man's contact with the celestial world of Divine Revelation in much the same way intrinsic faculties of the understanding reach out to secondary revelation in the world of creation.

Through faith man may receive the gift of Divine Revelation, which is a bounty far surpassing any factor of man's original creation, Bahá'u'lláh affirms. Just as a Manifestation of God, Embodiment of Love, acts for each spiritual cycle as a means of transmission of the virtues and truths of Divinity from the realm of Divine Essence to the world of creation, so in a lesser but included sense, the spirit of faith becomes the focal point through which perfect knowledge and universal love are carried to human consciousness.

Not as the result of justice to an individual does God grant this supreme blessing. No soul ever earns the reward of faith or the spiritual development it can bring. No amount of human effort or striving can complete the circuit to God, or create the flame of the fire of love for God necessary for the implantation of faith in man's soul. It is true that the potential capacity for faith has appeared previously on the human level in those forms of confidence which are partial and subject to destruction when the object of trust is discovered to be fallible; but spiritual faith is of a higher nature, coming to man through the Mercy of God, which protects him from the full penalty of his errors and pours out upon him a love that is creative. Finding a small response in the human breast it can bring to birth therein new susceptibilities. The attraction becomes, as the circle of consciousness widens, the Ultimate Object of all Trust.

As the phenomenal sun draws unto itself the life of a bursting seed until an embryo plant manifests the fragrance, the form and the color of a rose, giving evidence of aid from sun, rain and soil, so also in the realm of humanity the power of environment and of education brings to flower the physical and mental capacities of mankind. Processes of evolution in these worlds of limitation are somewhat symbolic of divine education and spiritual progress in the realm of the Holy Spirit, where heavenly attributes bring to bloom the flower of spiritual virtue in man. Viewed from the point of evolving humanity this is the flower of fulfilment; but from the mountain top of celestial consciousness it appears essentially as a new birth made possible because of the conjunction of human capacity "of knowing God and of reflecting the greatness of His glory"[5] with the creative as well as the fructifying forces of Divine love and truth. "Man becomes the collective center of spiritual as well as material forces . . . the effulgences of the kingdom shine within the sanctuary of his heart."[6]

That spiritual development does bring greater fruit of intellect and give to men unique capacity, Dr. Alexis Carrel is convinced. He writes in *Man, the Unknown* that moral

5—Gleanings, p. 77.

6—Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 297.

beauty "gives to those who possess it divine gifts, a strange, an inexplicable power. It increases the strength of the intellect. It establishes peace among men. Much more than science, art and religious rites, moral beauty is the basis of civilization."[7]

Moral beauty in its highest expression is a reflection of the Beauty of God.

Through love of God and faith in Him the dross and lead of human nature, the imperfections of physical and mental life, are transmuted into gold.

It is possible for a man of keen intelligence to recognize the divine station of a Manifestation of God and yet refuse to use his ability for love, faith and obedience in His service; just as it is possible for the intellect to see the wisdom of moral laws, but continue to follow the pleasures of worldly desire. It is only when man is not alone motivated by a desire to find the truth, but impelled by love for it and dawning faith in it that he will gladly enter that destined station of sacrifice which is the final cleansing of the mirror of the human soul.

"They that tread the path of faith," says Bahá'u'lláh, "they that thirst for the wine of certitude, must cleanse themselves of all that is earthly—their ears from idle talk, their minds from vain imaginings, their hearts from worldly affections, their eyes from that which perisheth. They should put their trust in God, and holding fast unto Him, follow in His way."[8]

He who is sincere in the search for truth, loves truth, and will sacrifice comfort, rest, fortune, to discover the mysteries of the universe. If the love of a seeker is limited by love of the technique of reason in operation or tainted by a motive of mastery over one's fellowmen, in so far, the knowledge found will have its blind spots and its abuses. But he who is enkindled with the fire of the love of God, sacrifices not only his physical comfort and his previous learning, if need be, in open-minded search, but also relinquishes the desires and imperfections of his lower nature for a taste of divine Knowledge and the development in himself and in other men, of divine as well as human attributes. This is obedience.

"So complete must be thy consecration," declares Bahá'u'lláh, "that every trace of worldly desire will be washed from thine heart. The station of absolute self-surrender transcendeth, and will ever remain exalted above every other station."[9]

When the desires at last become co-ordinated through love, then the understanding, always neutral in its human nature, always focussed through a will that arises from desire, finds its will unified with the Will of God through purification of the heart. What the Will of God is, what increasing knowledge of attributes of God means, what the Light of God will do to the souls of scholars, scientists, artists, musicians, poets, teachers, homemakers, can thereafter be revealed through the door thus opened in the human soul. The key to that door, as has been sug-

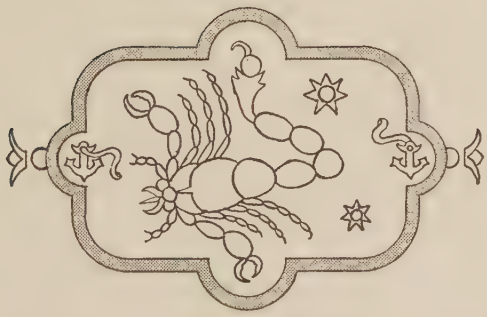
7—p. 130.

8—Iqán, p. 3.

9—Gleanings, p. 338.

gested, is spiritual love. The door itself is the synthesis of the faculties of understanding which gives proper balance and permits the use of the greatest talents of the individual soul, whatever in each case they may be. It is this integration that makes possible recognition that human life finds its true focus in God's Manifestation. The sign in man of this higher consciousness is the appearance of the celestial reality of faith, which gives to the "door" the quality of immortal life—as long as the soul keeps its faith in God through continuance in the path of renunciation. This path requires willingness to follow the light of Divine knowledge as it grows brighter and brighter with man's spiritual progress. For, 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains, faith to be faith, must first be conscious knowledge and second, good deeds. Deeds are the outward evidence of soul-obedience to the laws of God, an effect that must follow the cause, if the cause of faith be real. Actions are the proof of illumination. In them, capacities and blessings are revealed as one when man has begun to reflect the Light of God.

With the door of revelation opened in the human soul under the influence of a Manifestation of God, creation takes on a new appearance in human understanding, and man, no longer suppressed by the inferiority interpretation of a Copernican theory on one hand or exalted on the other by false imaginings that he can attain Godhood, finds that at last he has crossed the first threshold of his true destiny as the apex and consummation of a moving universe which is sustained through the eternal law and love of God.



ECONOMICS AS SOCIAL CREATION

HORACE HOLLEY

"The fundamentals of the whole economic condition are divine in nature and are associated with the world of the heart and spirit."—*'Abdu'l-Bahá.*

THE world's economic condition might be likened to a house built upon a cliff, whose foundations are crumbling under the continuous impact of a raging sea. In that house, moreover, the inhabitants, instead of uniting in effort to repair the foundations, struggle violently with each other for possession of a structure on the verge of collapse.

This dire confusion is due to the fact that historically the word "economics" has acquired various and conflicting meanings. Some consider the term as referring to the means and methods of personal enterprise, the conditions under which they must strive to succeed in order to attain wealth. Some identify economics with the policy of the state. Others conceive it to be a social philosophy based upon a class interest. Such interpretations, when translated into action, create confusion and discord, threatening the very basis of civilization.

Examining the systems corresponding to these various meanings, we find that the "science" of economics, whatever its particular origin, is either a mere description of some one existing social form, or a projection of hope that some new form can be applied as a blueprint project to the international society and replace discord and inefficiency with cooperation and universal well being. Behind capitalism, for example, we can see the influence of the American frontier, with its emphasis upon individualism; while behind socialism stands the energetic vision of one social philosopher who rejected the very essence of human nature and rested his sole faith upon the abolition of individual moral responsibility.

In reality, the world today contains no true economic system nor science of economics. What we actually have are nothing else than competitive nations and classes, employing economic weapons and clashing social philosophies in the new and more sinister form of war developed out of the general unsettlement which followed the international struggle of 1914-1918.

From the point of view of the Bahá'í teachings, the necessary attitude toward this vital problem is one of honest humility and of sincere

open-mindedness. These teachings illuminate the whole question by transferring economics from the arena of social struggle and revolution to the arena of spiritual truth.

What we are to understand is that human society throughout the entire world is undergoing a complete transformation. Until we perceive the higher power at work, and realize the final outcome, any insistence upon one or another of these struggling systems and theories can but contribute to the prevailing chaos. While one civilization and era are dying, and another is coming to birth, the values of past and future seem hopelessly confused in the chaos of the present hour. We must stand above this torment and confusion if we would enter whole-heartedly into the creative spirit which has begun to remold the world.

THE REAL ISSUE IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD

THE Bahá'í teachings make this significant comment upon the present, transitional era: "Humanity, whether viewed in the light of man's individual conduct or in the existing relationships between organized communities and nations, has, alas, strayed too far and suffered too great a decline to be redeemed through the unaided efforts of the best among its recognized rulers and statesmen—however disinterested their motives, however concerted their action, however unsparing in their zeal and devotion to its cause. No scheme which the calculations of the highest statesmanship may yet devise; no doctrine which the most distinguished exponents of economic theory may hope to advance; no principle which the most ardent of moralists may strive to inculcate, can provide, in the last resort, adequate foundations upon which the future of a distracted world can be built."[1]

That profound and challenging statement reflects the fact that the issue is not one between capitalism and communism, nor between fascism and the classical economics of the personal liberties era, but between materialism and a conception of the nature and purpose of human life in which spiritual truth supplies the motive and defines the aim.

The issue was precipitated by the socialist philosophy, which accompanied the rise of our modern scientific industry, developed with it, and today engages the loyalty of countless numbers whose attitude toward socialism seems almost religious in character.

The essence of socialism, underneath all its varying forms and divergent theories, is the doctrine that human nature can never be trusted with that form of power associated with and flowing from the institution of private property. That doctrine arose at a time when the factory system was responsible for its worst abuses of the wage-earning class. At a time when "liberty" was the summit of the political ideal, and the movement of democracy had abolished the privileges of the feudal order; the abuses of the capitalist system seemed to throw human beings backward five hundred years in the evolution of civilization. A re-action against such injustice was inevitable. The socialist

1—The Goal of a New World Order, Shoghi Effendi.

doctrine, however, crystallized a *psychological* attitude and invested it with the dignity of a theory of history and of a true scientific economics.

This interesting and important historical experience acquired the power and momentum of an international movement. The social and economic theories forged in the heat and passion of a revolt against injustice became accepted as truths of permanent value, with the result that the entire development of modern industry has been accompanied by continuous threat of class rebellion against the national state. Nothing has exerted greater influence upon the evolution of the modern absolutist state than this constant pressure of revolutionary force exerted from within.

The modern state, it should be noted, has become increasingly socialistic, even when its aim is most definitely anti-socialism.

It is therefore possible to analyze the absolutist state and the socialist system as manifestations of the same fundamental psychology.

The first observation to be made is that the power to enact and apply economic statutes on a national scale is largely an illusion. The application of political power and authority to the economic field in no way follows the same laws and principles which control political power and authority in the older, strictly political field. In the political field, the authority of the state expressed itself through the establishment and maintenance of a social structure intended to control the relations of citizens as individuals. Between the conflicting interests of individuals the government could presumably wield impartial justice and employ due power in the exercise of its sovereign authority. But the state which enters the economic arena as an active party can no longer afford to be impartial. Its exercise of power in economic matters destroys the social framework developed since feudalism. The state becomes producer, banker, wage-earner and market. It becomes compelled to underwrite vast enterprises the ultimate success of which depends upon human factors, class interests, international competition, and other elements outside its normal control. In order to assure the successful outcome of these enterprises, it must extend its authority more and more, not merely over the actions but even over the very thoughts of the mass of the people. In such unforeseen extensions of state authority the trend is steadily away from political and economic realities, and more and more into the realm of belief, of thought and of conscience.

The arena of modern economics, consequently, is no longer bounded by the old considerations of production, distribution and consumption, but claims new, psychological boundaries which encompass every province of hope, wish and will. The ultimate end of this historic process, which began with the industrial revolution and was fatally accelerated by the destructive effects of the European War and the subsequent failure of international peace, is to make human beings, beginning with the moral and mental education of children and the drilling of innocent youth, totally subject to the au-

thoritarian state. Little, if any, place is left in this intricate scheme for the purely human values always associated with religion in its purity as a divine truth and a divine power.

The only hope for humanity lies in its capacity to rise from blind dissension into a higher and larger area of spiritual reality. The wings of the soul have become helplessly entangled in the mesh of materialism. We have magnified greed and fear into a science of society, forgetting the mystery of the origin and aim of human existence upon this earth. Hence this widespread degradation and servility to organized forms of competition not comparable even to those systems by which insects are able to survive. True freedom for men, Bahá'u'lláh declares, exists nowhere save in obedience to the laws of God.

The Bahá'í Faith is nothing else than the expression of those laws as they have been revealed to humanity in its most crucial stage of development.

RELIGION AND SOCIAL LAW

"Who, contemplating the helplessness, the fears and miseries of humanity in this day, can any longer question the necessity for a fresh revelation of the quickening power of God's redemptive love and guidance? Who . . . can be so blind as to doubt that the hour has at last struck for the advent of a new Revelation, for a restatement of the Divine Purpose, and for the consequent revival of those spiritual forces that have, at fixed intervals, rehabilitated the fortunes of human society?"[2]

What deeply impresses the Bahá'í is the tragic condition of a world which asserts human opinions and philosophies as valid social laws. While we have come to recognize how physical science is but the expression of truths written into the very substance of nature, the modern mind attempts to mold humanity itself—that vital life raised above nature—by statutes and systems rooted in custom, or by rationalizing hope, or reflecting a transient public opinion, or offering a new weapon in the strategy of conflict. Nowhere seems to exist the realization that the Creator who established laws for mineral, plant and animal could not have left mankind an orphan helplessly wandering in perpetual anarchy.

The influence of religion decayed from the moment when a traditional morality revealed to individuals in their personal relations began to fail them as guides and disciplines in their social relations. Churches unable to visualize the implications of industry became discredited, while the function of citizenship rapidly assumed the responsibilities and values of faith. Incapable of enlarging morality to include the nations, traditional religion seemed to recede to the vanishing point, or militantly reassert itself in terms of the once-powerful feudal church. State policy or class strategy has filled the vacuum left by the failure of ecclesiastical authority to control the progress of the modern world.

The result has been an augmenting degradation of society to the degree that war and struggle now represent the chief element in our international

2—Idem.

life. However enlightened one nation may be, its policy has become subject to conditions completely outside its control. It is compelled to meet the least advanced nation on that nation's terms. Not in armaments alone, but in matters of currency, tariffs, trade, immigration and mass psychology, the state today is forced to the standards of the most primitive member of the international powers. From the simpler point of view of the last century, a nation has become a garrison, and the various states approach bankruptcy without visible signs of relief.

The vast increase in the amount of humanitarian legislation, the deeper and sincerer attitude now prevailing in relation to collective responsibility for poverty, unemployment and other social evils, are, unfortunately, not the decisive elements in present-day civilization. These fruitful areas of ethical progress seem but as gardens standing in the path of vast armies, whose passing will "make a desert and call it peace."

The individual, consequently, is not part of a society which can command progress and assure relief. On the contrary, the modern individual, whatever his personal ideals and actions may be, forms part of a vast international struggle becoming daily more acute. The miraculous achievements of science, the spiritual qualities of loyalty and devotion, all are degraded and perverted to serve as weapons in the final war whose preliminary skirmishes have already begun.

Upon this tragic spectacle the Bahá'í teachings not only throw light but convey a certitude which no human evidence can deny nor any social influence betray.

As the nineteenth century attempted to reduce all human action and social movements to the level of cosmic law, seeking imperatives for economic policy as for the motion of the stars in the heavens, so this century, as the result of the spiritual influence shed upon minds and hearts by Bahá'u'lláh, is seeking in religion a basis for a truth adequate to uphold the pillars of an ordered civilization. The Bahá'í teaching has quickened the human spirit to realize that, as science is the truth about nature, so religion is the truth about man. If the Creator of the universe and of man has bidden human beings to love one another, to reverence the privilege of life, to attain unity one with another, these spiritual ordinances have for men the same validity that scientific laws have for the lower kingdoms of nature.

It is upon this firm, this eternal basis of assurance that Bahá'u'lláh reveals the universality of religion, and provides a starting-point from which the world can consciously create a society conforming to truth. Just as the prevailing economic notions are in essence but incomplete and unsound psychological attitudes, so the true economics of the future will express, enact and fulfill a conception of life from which fear, hatred and prejudice have been removed, and in which the individual can identify himself with a divine destiny ordained for the entire race. The positive proof that spiritual truth controls human existence comes only with the quickening of the spirit in response

to a divine Revelation. The negative proof, however, lies everywhere at hand, incontestable and unchallengeable, in the world's abject failure to attain peace and security on unmoral terms.

The vital contribution which the Bahá'í teachings make to religion is their development of spiritual truth from the area of the individual conscience to embrace the area of human and social relations as a whole. The follower of Bahá'u'lláh cherishes his new awareness of the interdependence of classes, races and nations. He comes to perceive that human society is one vital organism, now sick unto death, but capable of re-creation under the beneficent influence of the world spirit which Bahá'u'lláh has revealed.

The Bahá'í, therefore, recognizes only a world economy, a truth lived out together by people of all races and nations. For only a world economy can rest upon the wholeness and unity of human relationships. Any plan or policy falling short of complete world unity must inevitably fail, since it contains the poison of partisan struggle and resistance to the needs of mankind.

ECONOMICS AS SOCIAL CREATION

Any economic plan or policy, likewise, which reflects less than the full potentiality of man's spiritual nature will prove abortive. Modern man lives in a social wilderness which can only be redeemed by that true statesmanship rooted in obedience to a truth filling the soul from above. The task is to create a world society; and in this task economics is but one aspect of the supreme truth.

The Bahá'í teachings contain no specialized science of economics, no blueprints for an "age of abundance" to be ushered in by a few statutes or received as a gift from the machine. These teachings quicken the spirit, enlarge the mental and emotional horizon, free men from the prejudices and superstitions of the dead past, and establish a basis for the unification of mankind. They raise the level of consciousness to the plane of spiritual truth. But the task of redeeming the wilderness they leave to the working of man's own nature, the fulfilment of his destiny in this world in preparation for his larger life in other worlds of God.

The teachings, nevertheless, do afford far more than a glimpse of the final goal to be attained and the faith and courage for the task marking a turning-point in human history. The conclusion of this outline will suggest some of the positive principles made available as tools for the redemption of the wilderness which the world has become.

1. The institution of war has developed to a degree which destroys the very foundations of civilization and vitiates every legitimate hope for progress and stability, for international cooperation and the combined guidance of the world's noblest leaders and most enlightened minds. There can be no true economy as long as the institution of war endures. The essential step toward peace consists in the adoption by the nations of the principle of world federation already achieved on a local scale by the

United States, Switzerland and some other nations.

2. The application of science to industry has freed man from his servitude to nature but set him in more destructive conflict with his fellow-man. An industry of the modern type can only operate successfully upon a world scale. It is dependent upon international cooperation both for sustaining markets and for essential raw and semi-finished materials.

3. The relation of daily work to life has become artificial and sterile under the false belief that material wealth is the fruit of existence. The Bahá'í teachings set forth the nobility of labor and declare that every man must have a profession, art or trade. They uphold the truth that one's daily work fulfils one's responsibility to one's fellows, and is the source of self-respect and integrity. "The lowest of men," Bahá'u'lláh has said, "is he who sits and begs." In a Faith which relates religion directly to life, it is significant to note that work done in the spirit of service is considered a form of worship.

4. The Bahá'í teachings attest the natural and beneficial inequality of men, basing social unity upon diversity and not uniformity. Equality of opportunity, not equality of kind or attainment, is emphatically asserted. While differences of personal wealth are admitted, the extremes of poverty and wealth must be abolished. They recognize the principle of the graduated income tax and deal with the principle of inheritance. Agriculture is termed the first and most important industry. A form of local storehouse, maintained by the community, by which periods of prosperity and of want can be balanced, has been outlined.

5. "Economy is the foundation of human prosperity . . .Riches earned by personal effort, are justly deserving of praise . . .," 'Abdu'l-Bahá declared. Upon the rich lies a responsibility to share their wealth voluntarily with the poor. State regulation can never prove a substitute for the qualities of the soul. But the teachings assert the principle of profit-sharing, not of wealth-sharing, which gives such impetus to class hatred at the present time.

The co-partnership of capital and labor is the principal which must replace the exploitation of workers on the one hand, and the abolition of private property on the other. It rests upon the undoubted truth that both capital and labor require each other, and neither can prosper by the suppression of the other interest. In practice, the co-partnership calls not merely for a change of social attitude, but also the payment to labor of a share in the profits of the enterprise as well as a living wage. When humanity is ready, the working day can be greatly reduced.

6. Obedience to government is enjoined upon all, and Bahá'ís take no part in any factional or revolutionary movements. But the government of the future will look to moral and ethical standards in performing its social functions, basing its authority upon the spirit of trusteeship discharged for the welfare of all people. The first obligation of government in this period of transition is to promote the cause of universal peace. No state

and no people stand above the operation of divine law. The party system, and other historical evils of democracy, will be replaced by a system of elections unifying, rather than dividing, the body of the people.

7. The writings of Bahá'u'lláh, viewed as a whole, deal with the complete transformation of human society in this age, and concern the regeneration of the individual soul as well as the establishment of world civilization. His teachings provide a definite social order, with institutions capable of administering local, national and international affairs. This Plan may be regarded as the fulfilment of religion, and at the same time the masterpiece of social creation. Compared to the traditional forms of civilization, it represents the true balance between the extremes of liberty and authority whose opposed interests and demands are bringing the old cycle to its end.

These, and other truths which might be selected from the writings of the Faith, indicate only the skeleton of the new world community the creation of which is its essential aim. Economics is no more than the shadow of that higher spiritual truth by which the soul achieves its eternal destiny. The following passage describes the social ideal upheld in the Bahá'í teachings:—

"The unity of the human race, as envisaged by Bahá'u'lláh, implies the establishment of a world commonwealth in which all nations, races, creeds and classes are closely and permanently united, and in which the autonomy of its state members and the personal freedom and initiative of the individuals that compose them are definitely and completely safeguarded. This commonwealth must, as far as we can visualize it, consist of a world legislature whose members will, as the trustees of the whole of mankind, ultimately control the entire resources of all the component nations, and will enact such laws as shall be required to regulate the life, satisfy the needs, and adjust the relationships of all races and peoples. A world executive, backed by an international Force, will carry out the decisions arrived at, and apply the laws enacted by, this world legislature, and will safeguard the organic unity of the whole commonwealth. A world tribunal will adjudicate and deliver the compulsory and final verdict in all and any disputes that may arise between the various elements constituting the universal system.

"A mechanism of world intercommunication will be devised, embracing the whole planet, freed from national hindrance and restrictions, and functioning with marvelous swiftness and perfect regularity. A world metropolis will serve as the nerve center of a world civilization, the focus towards which the unifying forces of life will converge and from which its energizing influences will radiate. A world language will either be invented or chosen from among the existing languages and will be taught in the schools of all the federated nations as an auxiliary to their mother tongue. A world script, a world literature, a uniform and universal system of currency, of weights and measures, will simplify and facilitate intercourse and understanding among the nations and races of man-

kind.

"In such a world society, science and religion, the two most potent forces in human life, will be reconciled, will cooperate, and will harmoniously develop. The press will, under such a system, while giving full scope to the expression of the diversified views and convictions of mankind, cease to be mischievously manipulated by vested interests, whether private or public, and will be liberated from the influence of contending governments and peoples. The economic resources of the world will be organized, its sources of raw materials will be tapped and fully utilized, its markets will be coordinated and developed, and the distribution of its products equitably regulated.

"National rivalries, hatreds, and intrigues will cease, and racial animosity and prejudice will be replaced by racial amity, understanding and cooperation. The causes of religious strife will be permanently removed, economic barriers and restrictions will be completely abolished, and the inordinate distinction between classes will be obliterated. Destitution on the one hand, and gross accumulation of ownership on the other, will disappear. The enormous energy dissipated and wasted on war, whether economic or political, will be consecrated to such ends as will extend the range of human inventions and technical development, to the increase of the productivity of mankind, to the extermination of disease, to the extension of scientific research, to the raising of the standards of physical health, to the sharpening and refinement of the human brain, to the exploitation of the unused and unsuspected resources of the planet, to the prolongation of human life, and to the furtherance of any other agency that can stimulate the intellectual, the moral, and spiritual life of the entire human race."[3]

CONCLUSION

The Bahá'í view is that economics is one aspect of the true world order yet to be achieved. In the unfoldment of the social process in every cycle, economics becomes that best method of adapting the creative instinct of human beings to the fulfilment of physical necessity. But the best method cannot appear until the highest motive possible for the cycle has been firmly and consciously established.

The existing national economies are beset with peril precisely because the highest motives of the past are fatally weakened. No basis can exist for economic science until human values are re-established on a scale of world accord.

A true world economy can be neither the particular social experience of the West nor of the East, but a larger and more inclusive vision of human possibilities.

An essential element of the future economy will be its adaptability to progressive conditions. The prime condition must be a world government able to maintain the world view, and command the technical experience of the ablest minds. Our present struggle is inevitable, in order to destroy the influence of an outgrown past.

3—The Unfoldment of World Civilization, Shoghi Effendi.

"TO HIM THAT KNOCKETH"

COMPILATION

MAYE HARVEY GIFT

He who seeks Us with perseverance shall be assuredly guided unto Us.

—*Qur'án.*

THE VALLEY OF SEARCH

He hath endowed every soul with the capacity to recognize the signs of God.

O Thou kind Lord! Praise be unto Thee that Thou hast shown unto me the highway of guidance.

From among all created things He hath singled out for His special favor the pure, the gem-like reality of man, and invested it with the unique capacity of knowing Him and reflecting the greatness of His glory.

I testify, O my God, that Thou hast created me to know Thee and to adore Thee.

All that which ye potentially possess can, however, be manifested only as a result of your own volition.

O my God, Thou dost perceive me turning unto Thee and relying upon Thee.

Who else but yourselves is to be blamed if ye choose to remain unendowed with so great an outpouring of God's transcendent and all-encompassing grace?

O Lord, my shortcomings are many, but the ocean of Thy forgiveness is boundless; deal with me according to Thy grace.

Every man hath been, and will continue to be, able of himself to appreciate the Beauty of God. Had he not been endowed with such a capacity, how could he be called to account for his failure?

O Lord of forgiveness and pardon! Forgive my sins, pardon my shortcomings and cause me to turn to the Kingdom of Thy clemency.

The faith of no man can be conditioned by anyone except himself.

O my God, make me true and sincere before Thy Face.

Every discerning eye can, in this Day, perceive the dawning light of God's Revelation, and every attentive ear can recognize the Voice that was heard from the Burning Bush.

Animate my spirit, inform my heart, open my eyes and make my ears attentive.

ATTRIBUTES OF THE SEEKER

The seeker must be free from the bondage of vices and passions, for all these are obstacles.

O Lord, deliver me from the bondage of the material world.

Be ye pure like unto air so that ye may enter the sacred abode of My friendship.

O Lord, sanctify and purify my

heart so that the effulgence of Thy love may shine therein.

The state in which one should be to seriously search for the truth is the condition of the thirsty burning soul desiring the water of life, of the fish struggling to reach the sea, . . . of the lost and wandering ship striving to find the shore of salvation.

O Lord, behold this thirsty one journeying toward the river of Thy bestowal and hastening to the ocean of Thy generosity.

To reach this goal, the seeker must sacrifice his all. That is, he must set at naught whatsoever he has seen, heard or learned, to the end that he may attain the domain of the spirit which is the City of God.

O compassionate God, thanks be unto Thee, for Thou hast guided me to Thy path.

Man can never hope to attain unto the knowledge of the All-Glorious until he ceases to regard the words and deeds of mortal men as a standard for the true understanding and recognition of God and His Prophets.

O Lord, remove the veils from my eyes and dispel the darkness of ignorance.

At every step, aid from the Invisible will attend him and the heat of his search be intensified.

O Thou kind God, in the utmost state of humility do I entreat and supplicate at Thy threshold, seeking Thy illimitable assistance.

When the channel of the human heart is cleansed of all worldly and impeding attachments, it will unfailingly perceive the Beloved and be led to the City of Certitude.

O God, the clouds of superstition have covered the horizon of my heart, dispel these clouds so that the lights of the Sun of Reality may shine.

THE GOAL OF THE SEEKER

The true seeker wishes only union with the object of his desire, and a lover's sole aim is to meet his beloved.

O Lord, turn my face unto Thy divine face.

The first duty prescribed by God for His servants is the recognition of Him Who representeth the Godhead in both the Kingdom of His Cause and the world of creation.

Rejoice me by the Manifestation of Thy everlasting identity, O Thou Who art more real than myself.

The person of the Manifestation hath ever been the representative and mouthpiece of God.

Cause me to advance to the One Whom Thou wilt manifest.

The seeker should regard all else beside God as transient, and count all things save Him Who is the Object of all adoration as utter nothingness.

O God, help me to remain constant and firm while in this journey to Thee, so I may reach Thy kingdom and attain Thy will.

Then will the outpouring grace of the holy and everlasting Spirit confer such a new life upon the seeker that he will find himself endowed with a new eye, a new ear, a new heart and a new mind.

Give sight to my eyes, hearing to my ears and understanding and love to my heart.

One drop out of the ocean of His bountiful grace is enough to confer

upon all beings the glory of everlasting life.

Thou hast opened the gate of Thy bounty to all who are in the heavens and upon the earth.

Let the flame of search burn with such fierceness within your heart as to enable you to attain your supreme and most exalted goal—the station at which ye can draw nigh unto, and be united with, your Best Beloved.

O my God! Thy nearness is my hope and to commune with Thee my joy.

ADMONISHMENT

FRANCIS A. KELSEY

Contemplate the mercy of thy Lord,
O Mortal,
And be thou not unmindful
Of My Potent Word.
Art thou not aweary
Of thy selfhood
And worn with seeking solace
In thy whim?
How long shalt thou ignore
Thy destiny
And wander far from Me,
Thy Hope?
Cleave not to things of earth,
Thy tomb,
For they but wearily shun
Thy presence.
Nowhere in all Creation
Canst thou find
A friend except in Me,
Thy True Companion,
For no one even knoweth thee
But thy Lord.
Lovest thou the creature?
Nay, 'tis I
That lovest him in thine heart,
For thee.

IN THE MASTER'S PRESENCE

INEZ GREVEN

LOOKING back on the days spent in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá at Haifa, in 1920 and 1921, I come more and more to realize that each word, each act, of the Master which seemed to me at that time the unrelated events of a gloriously happy day were, in reality, forming a perfect whole, teaching a complete conduct of life. The lessons were given so simply that their significance was not fully appreciated until, in subsequent years, the tests of daily life made me realize that they covered every need.

In re-reading the notes taken during that first visit to Haifa, I find that the point most stressed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, except perhaps that of love, was happiness. The Master knew how seldom this art of happiness is achieved by us; it was not a mere passive acceptance of life that He wished to create in us, but a radiant and contagious joy that would overflow into each task of the day. The Master said to me on one occasion that no spiritual progress was possible without happiness. Also, that if one were sad when entering a lovely garden one could neither enjoy it nor tell others of the beauty of its flowers and their perfume when one went away. If you are sad here, he continued, you will not enjoy the divine bounty of this garden.

THE Master sent for each one of us in turn every day for a short talk, and His greeting was invariably the same: "How are you? Are you well? Are you happy?" On several occasions I had to admit that I was *not,* indeed that I was sad and ashamed due to the fact that in this holy spot I was still able to see the faults of others (and be annoyed by them), and this inner condition of mine was a cause of deep unhappiness. I asked why it was that everything seemed so much more apparent at Haifa than elsewhere and the Master explained that an atom of dust cannot be seen, but when it is placed in the path of the sun it becomes visible. And when a butterfly is drawn to the light through the power of love, its beauties become manifest.

Again speaking of happiness, 'Abdu'l-Bahá instructed us never to let the material things of life make us unhappy—do we think they are worth while? No, they are a mere passing deceit. A mother sometimes turns against her child; a husband or wife may forget after a year's separation, but the love of God is eternal, He never forgets. He is always with you.

See what a high station the Kings and Queens have had in the material world and now it has all passed and is without result. All material things have the same ending, but in the Kingdom of God the lowest have been made the highest. I assured the Master that the material things never made me sad, but the strong critical faculty in myself did, whereupon He replied that to be aware of one's faults is a good condition and causes perfection, but to see the faults of others makes one decrease in perfection. Never sit with the birds on the lower branches, but fly to those on the highest branches. Look at the creatures only as the handiwork of God and their relation to Him; do not let them make you sad.

So many memories of that glorious Haifa visit come to mind—small acts of the Master done in a large manner. I recall the day when little Foad (at that time not more than two or three years old) came into the room where 'Abdu'l-Bahá was giving us a talk and handed Him a very beautiful pear from the garden. There was no displeasure at this interruption, nor was the tiny grandson allowed to feel any indifference to his gift; the Master gathered the child to Him, took a large knife and cut the pear into as many pieces as there were persons in the room (about six or seven) and insisted that we each eat one then and there. I also see the gesture with which the Master put His hand into a box of chocolates, which someone had brought Him from Europe, and gave them to the waiting children. All the generosity of which He was the exemplar was expressed in that one movement. Not a few pieces picked here and there, but the hand thrust deep into the box and brought up overflowing. Or when He urged us at table to "Eat, eat,"—then our plates were piled high as little mountains and we did not know if this were a test of our obedience or lavish hospitality! I only recall that after I had made myself finish the last grain of rice, I felt very virtuous and as if my sacrifice had surely won recognition on the Abhá plane.

Those days at Haifa are in memory woven into a pattern of pure bliss—a time when although one dwelt on earth one's spirit was in heaven. Time lost all meaning; it was of no importance whether it was Monday or Tuesday, March or May. We lived entirely by the sun of the Master's Presence; those moments before we were summoned to His house, to be given a private talk, were full of excitement and those when we caught a glimpse of His turban above the garden wall, as He passed on the road for His daily walk, were full of a glowing and quiet emotion.

When we told the Master how grateful we were for this great privilege of being permitted to visit Haifa, He answered, yes, but your conduct when you leave here will prove your gratitude to God for this bounty.

One evening at supper I asked the Master why it was that so many pilgrims to Haifa shared the same experience, inasmuch as they did not realize at the time of being there the full significance of all they were receiving; that it was only later upon

reaching home that the full light seemed to burst over them. The Master answered by pointing to a hanging lamp overhead, which cast a large circle of shadow on the table, and saying that directly under the lamp there is always a shadow. It is only when one comes out from under the shadow that one receives the full benefit of the direct rays.

During the first part of our visit in 1921 we were only three at the Pilgrim House. 'Abdu'l-Bahá seemed to feel that we were lonely (perhaps because the year before we had been nineteen or twenty together) and due to this gave us a great deal of his time. He came many mornings about eleven o'clock, after He had taken His walk, and rested in one of the bedrooms for a short while. Then He would sit at the open doorway and talk to us. One morning He told us of two things that had happened before He came to us. One of the Master's grandsons was interpreting for Him on this day and afterwards, when we spoke together, said: "This is the first time I have ever heard the Master refer to any miracle He has performed." This is how it came about that 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke of these miracles; He had sent us, early that morning, a large silk handkerchief full of jasmine blossoms, from the garden at Bahji, with which to decorate the dining-table. When I thanked the Master for them, and said how heavenly the perfume was, He said, yes, I have given some of them also to an English officer who came to me this morning in great distress because his wife is ill unto death. He begged me to pray for him that his wife might be healed. I gave him a handful of these blossoms to take to her, told him that she must inhale the perfume and that I would pray for her. Now she will recover.

A few minutes later the Master told us something that happened while He was taking His walk, and began to laugh as if recalling something very amusing. About a year ago, He said, an old, old man, whose house I pass sometimes when walking, came out to the gate to speak to me. He said that he was very sad because his greatest wish in life had never been fulfilled—and that was to have a child; he and his wife were old now and hope was gone, but perhaps if I would pray for them God might hear it and send them a child. I promised him I would pray for him that his wish be fulfilled. I had not seen the man again until today, and as I passed the house he came running out to the road and held up the tiniest baby I have ever seen—just so big—and the Master, laughing heartily, marked off between His hands a space so short that it was inconceivable any baby could be so tiny and live.

During the latter part of our visit another pilgrim joined us and many scientific questions were asked. 'Abdu'l-Bahá answered these, but said He preferred to have the conversations held to more spiritual lines, especially when some expected guests from Beirut should arrive. Two of the questions recalled were as follow:

Are the planets inhabited? Yes, but not with our form of life; each kind must have its own element.

What is the cause of sun-spots? Volcanic eruption of radium.

On another occasion 'Abdu'l-Bahá said that in the future all countries would become tea drinkers—such as China, England, Japan and Russia are today. He explained that tea aids digestion and opens the door to spiritual influences, whereas coffee is disintegrating (due to the pulverized particles it contains) and is a physical stimulant.

When we were a large group at the Pilgrim House, as in the Spring of 1920, there was occasionally a conflict of opinion as to some happening of the day. I recall one morning in particular when argument had waxed hot over the loss of a piece of jewelry in front of the Shrine of the Báb. One of the pilgrims said that this was symbolic, the meaning was clear that all such silly vanities must be lost at Haifa; but the whole gathering dissented with one voice. Then the advocate of no jewelry carried the argument into the realm of dress, insisting that we should adopt a simple uniform of some cheap material. This remark was met with even firmer resistance and the verbal battle was in full force when we became aware that the Master had entered the room. One moment of His presence was sufficient to make us realize the banality of our conversation and the futility of such argument. But 'Abdu'l-Bahá glanced around the long table where we were sitting and, designating each in turn, and said that He found Mrs. —— suitably dressed for her position in life (her dress was of the best quality and workmanship to be had) as also Mrs. ——, (whose dress was of gingham cut on the lines of a wrapper). In referring to this incident later, the Master said to me that when there are so many in one house there is apt to be friction, but you must be the peacemaker. When the conversation turns to war you must lead it back to peace—or leave. I said that these were almost the first words I could recall from my childhood, as my grandmother never tired of teaching us: "Blessed is the peacemaker." The Master declared that today she is enjoying the Kingdom of God for those words alone.

On the last day of our 1921 visit I was benumbed by the pain of the coming separation; I must have sensed that it was to be my last time with the Master. Several times during that day I was called to His house and He explained that it was as a special favor, due to my leaving. When my sister and I were saying our last farewells, and showing very evidently our sadness, the Master said, do not be sad, for there is no separation. How much better to be absent in body, yet present in spirit, than to be with me always in person, as are many who live here and do not know me in spirit. Then, pointing to a streak of sunlight on the floor, He said that although the sun is so far away yet its light is ever with you, and so no matter where you may be I shall always be near you.

I feel that these words of promise should give to each believer who had not the opportunity of seeing the Master in the body that measure of happiness that He so wished for all of us.

CHRISTIAN EUROPEAN CYCLE

BOOK REVIEW

HELEN INDERLIED

"THE idea that a culture is an organism which has a rhythm of its own and a certain fixed cycle of development is a very ancient idea," writes Mr. Rudhyar,[1] "but one which has recently been popularized by Oswald Spengler, and other German philosophers." "Every entity," Mr. Rudhyar continues, "is produced with a certain rhythm and goes through a life-cycle. This entity may be constituted by any type of substance; in other words it may be a biological entity like a cat or a tree or even a molecule, or it may be a psycho-mental entity like a religion, or an art form, or a socio-political form called 'a state'."

The term "cycle" implies change, for the end of a cycle leads to the beginning of a new one—most people resent this idea of change, especially in art, religion or government. The reason for this resistance, Mr. Rudhyar believes, is that people in general have not as yet attained to a good historical perspective of the past. Such a view would make clear the reason why changes must logically come. When crises occur—as the present world crisis—many people are baffled and do not know the meaning, nor do they realize that a crisis, which they fear as a calamity, is merely a climax in growth, a phase of evolution. Life in its unfolding has ever followed a process of growth, maturity and decay, evincing a certain rhythm of existence resulting in what is termed "a cycle."

"The only complete racial cycle which we know," says Mr. Rudhyar, is what he calls the "Christian European Cycle," from about 100 B. C. to about 1900 A. D. i. e. 2000 years in extent. It is well worth our while to study Rudhyar's analysis of this cycle in order to gain light on present day happenings—for "history repeats itself." The author asserts that such an analysis ought to be "of vital interest to all men, especially at this critical moment when the old European culture-cycle is being ended and a new phase of world life is beginning, affecting in different ways Europe, America and Asia. We believe that this new phase is almost universally misunderstood. In fact most of the present chaos in the mind of our generation is due to this; and we believe that great light and serenity will come to those who patiently and perseveringly probe the present situation of the world (especially the Western World).

The cycle Rudhyar is to describe begins as all cycles do with an Orig-

1—Cycle of Culture and Sacrifice, by Dane Rudhyar.

inal Impulse. It is like "a new sense of life, a new tone of life, a new Ideal. This spirit Impulse spreads pervading as it were many lands and many souls. It does so not really as a doctrine, but rather as a faith, as a wave of enthusiasm for a new spirit flowing outward. This new spirit always requires for its outlet some great spiritual Personality or Personalities whose lives are perfect manifestations of that new ideal of life. They collectively constitute the Original Impulse, or rather they are the channels through which this Spirit Impulse flows with the racial substance of humanity. Associated with this Super-Personality is always a circle of followers called 'disciples', who as a group become impregnated with the new faith and whose destiny it is to pass it on to the others."

"The flow of this wonderful Impulse thus released through special channels, though it spreads far, cannot expand indefinitely. A reaction is bound to follow. Powers of opposition are aroused. The old ideals, old faiths, old systems oppose more and more powerfully the spread of the new spirit which eventually reaches the limit of expansion." For instance with Christianity, it did not spread all over the globe. Resistance developed from attachment to the old forms and ideas of Judaism and the Roman world. However, it went far, especially westward, permeating all regions of Europe and later to the New world. This expansion marks the end of the Involutionary period.

"THE Involutionary period in any cycle," Mr. Rudhyar asserts, "is the seed period, during which no green vegetation is seen. It is hidden underground. The new religion is not realized. In the outer world, during this same time, the decay of old forms occupy the attention of most."

This Involutionary period of the Christian era began about 100 B. C. and extended, according to Rudhyar, to about 900 A. D. inclusive of Charlemagne, making about 1000 years in all. Christianity during this period, was very little known. At first there were little groups who met secretly, for persecution developed on account of Jesus' claim to a divine station. The Emperor was supposed to have that station with the Romans and Moses with the Jews. Even when Constantine adopted Christianity as a state religion, it was not understood in its reality. It was not really functioning. Decay of old religions and beliefs in the Roman Empire were more noticeable by citizens than the power of the new religion. Corruption, cruelty, sensuality and godlessness were apparent in the old civilization—Christianity was 1000 years in this hidden Involutionary period.

The next period in the Christian European Cycle, according to Mr. Rudhyar, was the period of Evolution. "It began about 900 with Charlemagne's influence. He had brought to Paris Irish and Mediterranean wise men who gave the impulse to that movement which eventually culminated in the formation of the Universities and Gothic culture—the only true Christian European culture. Monks followed his armies and laid the foundations for monasteries whence radiated knowledge and spir-

itual energies. Modern nations began to be outlined. Joan of Arc appeared, America was discovered. The fantastic crusades, chivalry, the Celtic tales, the mystery of alchemical lore symbolize the first half of the Evolutionary period."

THE second half of the Evolutionary period begins with the Renaissance, preluded by its occult and spiritual counterpart: Rosicrucianism. This half is characterized by the development of mind, scientific mind. The life-form becomes more and more organic and reaches more definitely to some sort of center, toward some sort of self-consciousness. It thus becomes more set. Nations become more strictly individualized. Problems of form increase in importance. This ends the Evolutionary period which Mr. Rudhyar suggests, we might say extended from about 100 years after the coronation of Charlemagne as Holy Emperor of Christianity to a similar period of time after Napoleon's coronation—which was a symbol of the death of the Christian European whole (900-1900). During the nineteenth century the Christian European Cycle passed to the Transvolutionary period. Some seed should result from this matured condition. In other words, some souls should have evolved sufficiently to have acquired capacity to gather the meaning of the Christian European Cycle and pass it on. "Just as seed must sacrifice itself as seed that the plant may come into being, likewise these Seed-men," writes Mr. Rudhyar, "after receiving the meaning of the cycle must sacrifice themselves to set free the new spirit impulse," that is to form the Involutionary period of our own new day.

"The nineteenth century," Mr. Rudhyar says, in striking phraseology, "marked the *supreme moment* of the consciousness for the race as a spiritual whole! It was a century of prophets, of avatars, of leaders in all realms of life and activity, philosophical and scientific knowledge, religion, etc. beginning with the great religious movement of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh in Persia and Syria, which gave the keynote—in a cosmic sense—of the new era (first declared in 1844); then following with the Communistic and Socialist movements (Communist Manifesto 1848); the Theosophical movement and its numerous off-shoots; the general change of our mode of living which came in the wake of numberless scientific discoveries and inventions."

"Since the great war we are beginning to witness the breaking down of life-forms evolved during the Christian European Cycle. *Devolution* is the key-note, life turning destructive of the very form it built and which, in the case in question, had been perverted or calcarized into a shell. Yet there has been in the race considered as a whole a supreme moment of consciousness: that is to say, there have been a few individual souls who have become vehicles transfigured by such a consciousness of the racial or cyclic whole, in whom the European Cycle has known its primordial and ultimate meaning, who have collectively become the seed grown as the ultimate achievement of the European plant."

The first of these organs for soul-

consciousness as indicated by Mr. Rudhyar, was "the Báb who announced the birth of the Bahá'í movement by his great proclamation at Mecca, which occurred simultaneously with the birth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Later in another great moment in the spiritual history of mankind appeared the greatest of the three Bahá'í prophets—Bahá'u'lláh—who as "the glory of God" (literal translation of his name) will manifest through a true spiritual world-consciousness, or a world federation of religions."[2]

Thus Mr. Rudhyar has skilfully led us in thought from the beginning of "the Christian European Cycle" starting about 100 B. C. over the 2000 years of its extent to its close about 1900. And the Transvolutionary period of this European Cycle overlapped and merged in 1844 into the Involutionary period of the great Universal Cycle of Bahá'u'lláh, who to quote Mr. Rudhyar, "gives the keynote of the new era."

2—The Chart of the Twentieth Century.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Edited by BERTHA HYDE KIRKPATRICK

Nowhere is God more potently and patently present than in the economic process. . . . When individuals, groups and geographical areas engage in producing goods which they do not themselves consume, but which they exchange for what they need, they become functional members one of another, not because they intend it but because they cannot help it.—DR. HENRY NELSON WIEMAN.

In like manner all the members of the human family, whether peoples or governments, cities or villages, have become increasingly interdependent. For none is self-sufficiency any longer possible, inasmuch . . . as the bonds of trade and industry, of agriculture and education, are being strengthened every day. Hence the unity of all mankind can in this day be achieved. —'ABDU'L-BAHÁ.

But the term "Christendom" once meant something; it meant that the European nations were held together by a common body of moral and religious convictions. Does it mean anything now?—SIR WALTER MOBERLY in *The Christian Century.*

Theoretically there can be collective security . . . within Christianity, which applies the same notion of brotherhood to all human relations, or within a communist society, which guarantees uniform patterns of human contact, or even in a world empire where all possible human conflicts are settled by an uncontested central authority. No such community exists or can at present be created in the religious or in the social or in the political field.—HANS SIMONS in *Social Research.*

. . . The community of the Most Great Name, (Bahá'u'lláh) whose world-embracing, continually consolidating activities constitute the one integrating process in a world whose institutions, secular as well as religious, are for the most part dissolving. —SHOGHI EFFENDI.

I doubt whether there was ever more rampant distrust than there is today. And yet—and this is the interesting point—I think there is more fundamental decency among people than ever there was. Decent employers distrust decent workmen and *vice versa;* their several organizations act in a spirit of defense rather than cooperation, so that problem after problem fails to find any real solution be-

cause of the lack of mutual faith. To me this means that the morality of decency is insufficient and needs something deeper to complete its unfinished work.—T. E. JESSOP, Professor of Philosophy at University College, Hull, England.

Know thou for a certainty that whoso disbelieveth in God is neither trustworthy nor truthful. This, indeed, is the truth, the undoubted truth.—BAHÁ'U'LLÁH.

If one looks squarely at these and many other such facts touching all organizations in the labor movement, then I think one is driven to the conclusion that the root of the difficulty is moral and spiritual, not primarily political or economic or organizational.—A. J. MUSTE, former head of Brookwood Labor College.

The fundamentals of the whole economic condition are divine in nature and are associated with the world of heart and spirit.—'ABDU'L-BAHÁ.

At the recent London sugar conference the French insisted that in the text of the agreement their language be used as well as English, the Germans said that in that case German must be used as well as French and English, and the Russians held that, if German was added, Russian must not be left out. So all four languages are to be officially used; but if this keeps on, some kind of Esperanto may be forced upon the diplomatic world —Adapted from the *Springfield Republican.*

One of the great steps toward universal peace would be the establishment of a universal language. Bahá'u'lláh commands that the servants of humanity should meet together, and either choose a language which now exists, or form a new one. This was revealed in the Kitab-el-Akdas (The Book of Laws) forty years ago.—'ABDU'L-BAHÁ.

Until very recent years I would not permit myself to speak of the abolition of poverty. . . . But now it is evident poverty can and must be abolished. There can be no other outcome of our marvelous development of American industry.—EDWARD A. FILENE in *The Springfield Republican.*

One of the most important principles of the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the right of every human being to the daily bread whereby they exist, . . . The arrangements of the circumstances of the people must be such that poverty shall disappear, that everyone, as far as possible, according to his rank and position, shall share in comfort and well-being—'ABDU'L-BAHÁ.

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